THE UNITER AND LIBERATOR OF AMERICA.

A

MEMORIAL DISCOURSE

ON THE

CHARACTER AND CAREER

OF

ABRAHAM LINCOLN:

DELIVERED IN THE

NORTH RUSSELL STREET M. E. CHURCH, BOSTON,

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 1865,

BY

GILBERT HAVEN.

"A laborer with moral virtues girt,
With spiritual graces, like a glory, crowned."

BOSTON:
JAMES P. MAGEE, No. 5 CORNHILL.
1865.

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At the close of the morning service in the North Russell Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Sunday, April 23, the undersigned was solicited to take the chair; whereupon, on motion, it was unanimously voted by the congregation to request the pastor, Rev. Mr. Haven, to furnish a copy of the discourse just delivered, on the character and career of President Lincoln, for publication.

JOHN H. COLLINS.

Boston, May 1, 1865.

Cambridge Press.
Dakin and Metcalf.

SERMON.

Thy gentleness hath made me great. Ps. xviii. 35.
He saved others, himself he cannot save. Matt. xxvii. 42.
All nations shall call him blessed. Ps. lxxii. 17.

The appalling deed of the last Good Friday begins to put on the fixed lineaments of the past. As that face and form, then so full of life, are frozen in death, so he who animated them is fast becoming solidified and shapen in the unchanging marble of history.

Still standing in the horrible shadow, how can we carve the features of the immortal dead? The chisel shakes in our trembling hand. The rain of sorrow blinds our eyes. In the ghastly darkness, we but faintly discern the spiritual form that has so suddenly been struck from its earthly home and has forever vanished from the eyes of man. He, who but yesterday was the centre of all human observation; whose every word, as he himself declared but three nights before his death, was in no unimportant sense a national decree; from whom were the issues of life and death to the imperious leaders of the rebellion and their too willing subjects; upon whose course foreign potentates fastened watchful eyes, and foreign peoples were yet more intent; the foremost man in all the world; — now lies he low in his bloody shroud. A nation weeps around his bier. The world bemoans his fate. Never before did so wide and bitter a cry pierce the skies. Never before were the heads of so many millions, waters, and their eyes fountains

of tears, weeping day and night for the slain of the daughter of their people. The great day of the Church has become yet more solemn in the annals of America. Let not the fifteenth of April be considered the day of his death, but let Good Friday be its anniversary. For then the fatal blow was struck. He died to the conscious world ere the day had died. We should make it a movable fast, and ever keep it beside the cross and the grave of our blessed Lord, in whose service and for whose gospel he became a victim and a martyr.

That crime I cannot dwell upon in such an hour. The criminal is not the object of my revenge. Justice will demand his death, — to whom no less would it be a mercy; for it would shut him from the sight of the race he had dishonored and the earth he had polluted, and cast him into the congenial fellowship of his spiritual and eternal companions in rebellion and in sin. Not the awful transgressor nor his crime, not even the gigantic abomination of which this deed was the natural and inevitable fruit, shall becloud the hour. Let us look the rather upon him whose earthly work is done; not upon his form, laid out in "long-stretching death," that is slowly moving amid tearful myriads, through mighty cities, by the side of inland seas, across yet vaster seas of billowy or level green, to its beloved home in the heart of the land, fit resting-place for him who shall ever live in the heart of the nation: but upon the features of his life, that we may learn why he grew to such a height, and how we may, in our humbler sphere, attain an equal perfection.

The Character and Career of Abraham Lincoln will therefore be the appropriate subject of our mournful meditations. These are harmoniously united. His career was but the flowering of his character, — his character the seed and germ of his career. Extraordinary circumstances gave that nature a fulness of opportunity for its development such as has most rarely, probably never before, fallen to the lot of man; but they did not make the man. The

most fruitful ground does not create the character of the seed it multiplies. It imparts a possibility of richness and fulness that inferior earths cannot afford. Still their own nature abides, and the oak is an oak, the ivy an ivy, in the richest as well as in the poorest soils.

His character was as complete when wrapped in the vesicle of his early privacy as in the grand uplifts of its wonderful consummations. As a child, a youth, an industrious, studious, obscure workman, a lawyer, politician, and statesman of Illinois, he displayed the peculiar qualities which in his higher sphere bore such abundant fruit. His first speech was as brief, as witty, as compact, as simple-minded and as good-natured as his last.

For these traits he is not to be praised. He was created in the frame of soul that he ever exhibited. For their culture he alone merits eulogy.

God needs various workmen for his varied work. And as a wise master-builder uses a great variety of material for his manifold edifice, and works this material into a yet greater variety of forms, that the whole may be a unit of perfection; so does the Divine Master-builder in his infinitely grander structures of soul, erected on earth for time and for eternity.

The stately cathedral has its massy stone, lying in huge boulders under its visible foundations, rising in shapen blocks to its roof and pinnacles, carved in daintiest delicacy around its pillars, doors, and altar. This solid earth it lightens with graceful forms of wood, as though the heart of oak blossomed like the gentlest flower into fragrant beauty. These are yet more relieved by tints that flush the cold face of stone with life, and this vitality puts on its highest expression in the scenes, sacred and divine, into which the walls change under the touch of the great masters, as the shapely face of death becomes radiant with life and love under the inspiration of its Creator.

Thus does God build up the nation and the world. Thus does He use every style of character, every quality of spirit in His sublime cathedral of man, which He is patiently and persistently erecting, in truth and love, out of a redeemed and regenerated humanity, on the earth and in the heavens.

I. What, then, were the traits of soul which this eminent agent in the plan divine received from God and faithfully, usefully, and rewardfully developed?

1. We should only respond to the sentiment of every heart, hostile or friendly, when we place at the foundation of his character, honesty. This was his familiar appellation in obscurity. It has been none the less so in the greatness of his exaltation. Yet it fails to express the whole idea which it strives to embody. That is the rude, ungainly trunk, which, despite its rough exterior, is both the upholder and the nourisher of all the attractions that rejoice above it. It branches out in graceful boughs, with their rustling robes of green. It turns under the smiles of spring into an orb of odorous flowers. It depends in an autumn ripeness of golden fruit.

Honesty in him was not the calculating wisdom of the world as shown in its favorite and unworthy employment of that word. It was not from selfish policy that he was honest. Such honesty is really most dishonorable. It meant in him its true and original signification. It was sincerity, simplicity, impartiality, honor; in fine, the scriptural conception of this nature, guilelessness. If ever a man lived of whom it could be said he was without guile, that man was Abraham Lincoln. Look down as deep as you may into his profound nature, you will see that it is clear as a moteless fountain. It may seem to be shallow, it is so pure; and yet a second sight convinces you that though your eyes are sounding deeply, they touch not the bottom. As you look skywards on a clear day, you first fancy that you sweep the whole depth of the

dome with your glance; a second and more penetrating gaze shows you that you have only caught its lowest outlines. As it rises heights above heights, you exclaim, —

> "The *chasm* of sky above my head
> Is Heaven's profoundest azure,
> . . . . . an *abyss*
> In which the everlasting stars abide."

Thus do you gaze into this pellucid nature. It is as simple and open as a child's, yet you cannot penetrate it; not because it interposes barriers to your gaze, but because your vision fails. It is none the less clear because it is so deep. Could you look farther, you would find the same nature, honest, unselfish, childlike; "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile."

The soul of this characteristic is absence of selfishness. That is the root of guile. Though not without the temptations common to all men, he was remarkably free from this propensity. This freedom from self-seeking is the more noticeable in contrast with the characters of most great men. Milton declares ambition "the last infirmity of noble minds." This passion implies a subtle love of self, and frequently mars the most exalted natures. Only one President before him seemed almost utterly free from it. Jefferson talked indifference, but was a ceaseless schemer and mover of political wires while professedly absorbed in his laboratory, study, and farm. Adams, Franklin, Jackson, Clay, were men of great parts, but a sense of their necessity to the movements of the nation gave to their strength the weakness of men. Their personality was to them an *essential* element in the events of their age. Not so with Washington and Lincoln. They were the priests placed over the abyss divine. The breath of God bore them onward in the accomplishment of his purposes. They were his willing servants, but servants only. They were

not necessary to his success. Each looked forward to the hour when the Master should take from them the harness and allow them to repose peacefully in the quiet of their homes. Each felt that others had greater wisdom than they. Each bent his ear kindly to hear what their more creative minds should say. Each sincerely sought the truth. Other men of might feel that they have the truth. They do not seek it. It comes to them. It is an inspiration. They must declare it or die. "Woe is me," cry Phillips and Everett, cry Sumner and Beecher, cry Greeley and Weed, "if I preach not that which I feel stirring within me." The President had no such call. He waited to hear their words. In sincerity of heart he deliberated, decided, acted.

This trait gave him that slowness of action, which was not unlike the stammering of Moses. He must hear the voice thrice ere he obeyed it. He must consider as he cannot create, deliberate as he does not divine.

2. But this guilelessness of heart and impartiality of judgment were joined to great faithfulness in adhering to the truths he had espoused. His step was as firm as it was careful. Having done all, he stood. Hampden's motto might properly have been his, — *Nulla vestigia retrorsum*. No step did he ever take backward. Men of ideas often fail when those ideas are born into actual life, and the Herods rise up for their destruction. They are bold in the closet and the forum, but timid in the field. Demosthenes was not only the greatest orator of Athens, he was her greatest democrat; none of her men of might equalled him in courageous defence of, and adhesion to, her central doctrine. And yet when she must sustain her idea at Chæronea, he fled before the legions of monarchy, and denied in shame the faith for which he had so valiantly contended. Cicero was equally courageous in words and cowardly in deeds, — a Roman in the forum, but not at the front.

So have been many idealists and reformers. Their shields have been thrown away when the enemy assailed them. Such are not the most renowned. They have the strength of soul both to create and to sustain. Socrates, Huss, Luther, Paul, could fight as well as speak, — die as heroically as they lived. Still this faithfulness is more sure to be revealed in those who accept the truth in full view of the perils it involves. Who takes the oath of allegiance before the enemy's guns, will be apt to abide by it in the succeeding charge. Lincoln believed in these truths from the beginning. But he did not embrace them as objects of duty till he saw the whites of the enemy's eyes, as they were rushing upon him to his evident destruction. Then, seizing them as if they were, as they were, loaded cannon, he henceforth used them steadily and valiantly in repelling and discomfiting his foe.

This trait was the more necessary in the tremendous fluctuation of popular feeling and current events. When the waves roared and were troubled, when the mountains shook with the swelling thereof, it was well for the nation that one held the helm who steered carefully, but calmly and steadily; who, if he did not hasten, did not go back; if he did not so soon as we prayed make the desired haven, never ran his vessel back upon the breakers we had passed. His faithfulness was one of his most admirable and most necessary traits.

3. We should be unjust to his character if we shrank from noticing his playfulness. In common with many superior minds, he was as sportful as a lamb. He liked a good story better than a great honor. No one ever more enjoyed

> "Jests and youthful jollity,
> Quips and cranks and wanton wiles;
> Nods and becks and wreathéd smiles,
> Sport that wrinkled care derides,
> And laughter holding both his sides."

A merry twinkle ever sat in his eyes. Ever when saddest with sorrow, a ray of this sunlight played on their salt drops. Napoleon, Luther, Socrates, Cicero, Cæsar, Wesley, Franklin, Webster, many great men, were of this nature. A jest-book attributed to Cicero was current in Rome long after his death. Cæsar was ever pointing his speech with these glittering specialties. Napoleon was full of mirth and jokes, even on the night before Waterloo. Their bon-mots were as brilliant as their battles. Lincoln, next to Franklin, if next, was the most famous jester of America. Each of these ever used a witty story to point an argument; and many was the laughable word uttered by the great diplomat of the Revolution, that did the people of that sad hour good like a medicine.

This playfulness was not unmanliness. It was the relief of an intensely overstrained nature, — the pleasant bloom of childhood dancing on the brow of age, — the reminiscence of the past, and prophecy of the future, that kept his heart green and juicy amid the furnace of fire, heated seven times hotter than ever before, where he was called of God to walk. It was an important element in his career. Without it, neither he nor the people could have walked erect. Those mirthful, melancholic stories creeping out on the top of great disasters, like light playing over graves, relieved the people in their terrific gloom. Not that he did not weep. No president ever wept so much. Not that he did not soberly gird himself to his fearful responsibilities. None ever wrought so patiently and persistently. But by a pleasantry he lightened his and our bursting hearts that would otherwise have sunk like lead in the mighty waters. His most famous story had in it the whole point of the controversy. Secretary Seward's more statesman-like declaration of the same necessity is hardly remembered, — that, having been elected President of the United States, he must

be acknowledged as such by all the States ; Lincoln's had not a little to do with his triumph.

4. His integrity was remarkable. In fact, all the traits we have mentioned, save perhaps the last, may be summed up in the one word, — Integrity. Here is his honesty, his simplicity, his impartiality, his steadfastness. He was an integer — a unit. His soul was one. There was no disunion there, — no conflict there. Its surface might be tossed, not its depths. He had doubts as to what policy to pursue, and often changed it with the changing moment ; but never, did he doubt his country, his cause, himself. It was the spinal column, that supported not him alone but the whole land. To it, as to a mighty tower, the people fled and felt that they were safe. Thousands of millions passed through his hand ; no itching palm caught the most soiled fragment of the tiniest currency. He assumed the errors, even the asserted peculations, of his subordinates as his own. The country smiled, but laid not the assumed sin to his charge. Its faith in his rectitude was unbounded. The most envenomed shafts were never aimed at that mark. Here, at least, his bitterest foes confessed that he was invulnerable.

5. But even this was not the seat of his strength. That lay in his love. His gentleness made him great. Sincere, honorable, faithful, true, he might have been, and yet not beloved. Franklin was as mirthful, Washington as incorruptible, Adams as just, yet for none of them did the people shed such floods of tears. Children and graybeards, man and woman, slave and freeman, beggar and prince, all poured forth their tributary tides of woe. "Behold how they loved him!" will all Europe say, as they hear this exceeding bitter wailing. It was because he loved them. The condition of the highest love is essential here. We loved him because he first loved us. He was the first President of the United States who seemed to carry in his warm-

est heart the heart of all the people. The pertinacious, cold-blooded leech of an office-seeker did not feel that he was answered in the selfish spirit which inspired his zeal. There was a fatherly affection even in the refusal. The bitter secessionist, even the relentless rebel, found only gentleness and love in his eye and voice and grasp. They were constrained to feel that they had become prodigals from, nay enemies to, a most tender and still affectionate father.

If these selfish or hostile men found such a welcome, how much more did the loyal. The most degraded slave felt the warm clasp of that paternal hand as a benediction. The most garrulous griefs were poured into a sympathetic ear. His most patient heart allowed every head to lie upon its broad, soft pillow. The people felt the throbbings of that heart warmly beating for them, and, like a tired child on its mother's bosom, sank confidently to rest.

Far more than his sagacious judgment, incorruptible integrity, and playful humor, did his deep affection for the nation support and carry us through this darkest night of our history. It is not his mother's knowledge of what is best for him, not her lightsome nature, not her unceasing faithfulness, that makes the sick child commit himself so confidently to her arms. It is her love that makes him trustful. Her judgment may err, strength may yield, joy may flee, but love never faileth. Many waters cannot quench it nor floods drown it. His greatest weakness only increases its strength. His dying makes it live forever.

So has the nation rested in his loving arms. She knew that his judgment was often at fault, however carefully he exercised it; that sometimes even his strength of purpose almost trembled under the fearful pressure to which it was subjected; that his pleasant smile became sadness, and the sunny wrinkles were channels for many tears. He had never spoken confidently of success. The mighty struggle he feared might result disastrously; the sick na-

tion might die; but dying or living she felt that he loved her. That quality of his soul was undiminished. Nay, it was the soul's self and grew the stronger when all else grew weaker.

Never did a great people so universally recognize and repay such love in its ruler. Never did a ruler so love his people. Cromwell loved religion first; Wellington, duty; England was the second in their heart; her people, last. Napoleon loved himself, not France; Cæsar, power, not Rome; Washington, the right and the country more than its people. All the great leaders of the revolution, all the great living leaders, reformatory, civil, and military, are devoted to the idea that controls them: this to liberty, that to union; this, America's glory, that, her destiny; this, philanthropy, that, piety; this, justice, that, honor; this, empire, that, prosperity. Not one of them can in a peculiar, profound, and personal sense be said to love the American people. That grace they want. Not that they do not love the nation; far from it. All have, all do; but it is a general, not a special regard; an affection that reveals itself in other forms than mere love. Not so with our great President. He held every one in his heart of hearts; he felt a deep and individual regard for each and all; he wept over the nation's dead boys at Gettysburg as heartily as over his own dead boy at Washington. Their death, more than his own child's, was the means of bringing him into an experimental acquaintance with Christ. That sorrow wrought in him a godly sorrow, which has become a joy forever.

Here then may we properly conclude his portraiture. It arises, like that of Him in whose image he and all of us are made, into the heights of love. Without profanity we may say Abraham Lincoln is love. By that nature will the future hail him. A John among the disciples, he, of all our public men, the most truly possessed and expressed the nature of his Lord and Master. Without revenge, without malice, without hardness or bitterness of

heart, he held loyal and disloyal, slave and master, black and white, rebel soldier and rebel leader, in his equal love. Had his dying lips been allowed to utter one sentence, we think it would have been the dying words of Christ; and for his assassin he would have prayed, "Father, forgive him, for he knows not what he does."

It was for this trait that such mourning bows the land; for this are the streets of his funereal journey lined thick with weeds of sorrow, thicker with mourning multitudes; for this do the subdued eyes of millions of strong, cool men,

> "Albeit unused to the melting mood,
> Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
> Their medicinal gum."

It was for this preëminently that the despised race, free or slave, pour forth their most piteous lamentations. Their tears of joy but yesterday are almost tears of blood to-day. He was the first President that took one of them kindly by the hand; the first that acknowledged their equal right with every other citizen to his official recognition. He was not merely their military liberator, breaking their bonds only because he could thus deliver himself from his enemies; but he was their friend and their father, carrying them in the same paternal arms in which he bore the rest of his children. Well may they cry out, as they see him thus suddenly leap into a chariot of fire and ascend to his reward, "My father! my father!" Well may they bewail because of him!

For this do ten thousand steeples knell their pathetic minor, while all listening hearts, as never before, beat responsive:

> "Keeping time, time, time,
> In a sort of Runic rhyme
> To the throbbing of the bells,
> Of the bells, bells, bells,
> To the sobbing of the bells:

Keeping time, time, time
To the rolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells,
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells,
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells."

Thus stands forth the character of this great man: of unblanched and unbending soul; without selfishness, yet full of feeling; without pride, yet ever regardful of the dignities of his position; without ambition, yet ascending to the topmost heights of sovereignty, and absorbing into himself more than dictatorial, far more than imperial and kingly powers; without the least malice, yet waging the bloodiest of wars; without boastful bitterness, yet making myriads of his enemies lick the dust; whose most loving heart ever irrigated, yet never drowned, his wise brain, making that, which is often in others a verdureless summit, in him a well-watered garden, full of choicest life.

Such was the nature of him to whom the heart of the people has gone out as never before to any ruler. They revered Washington, they respected Adams, they believed Jefferson, they admired Jackson, they loved Lincoln. God's gentleness had made him great.

II. How this character revealed itself in his career, there is no need that I should relate unto you. The details of that life will be the theme for many a historian. Irvings will yet arise who will devote their most graceful pen to the portraiture of this second Washington. Carlyles will make the splendor of their genius glow around the head of this greater than Frederic or Cromwell. Napoleons will make him a more faithful study and model than Cæsar. With every luxury of art and wealth shall the grand career of the cabin-boy of Kentucky, the Uniter and Liberator of America, stand in the libraries of kings and statesmen, in

humbler shape and larger love, on the shelves of all their people whose future that life both illustrated and assured.

1. Two dangers threatened the land when he assumed the reins of government, — disunion and slavery. The Scylla and Charybdis were on either side of the tossed and leaky vessel, when he took the helm. Fierce broke the waves on the rocky Scylla of disunion; fiercely did the Charybdian sands of slavery threaten to suck the ship in their shifting and ceaseless maelström. Both in influence invaded the whole land. A great party in the North supported disunion under the specious phrases of State sovereignty and no coercion; while all the land alike hated the slave and his kindred, and refused to touch, in the least, the iniquity or its victims. The President shared the feelings of the last, if not the sentiments of the first. His predecessor yet occupying the seat of government, if government it might be called which he had ceased to govern, was calling on the people to fast and pray, that the wayward sisters might return. Great men carried monstrous petitions wrapped in the powerless American flag and laid them before Congress, entreating that body to consent to the nationalizing of slavery by giving it the best half of our territory and all our constitution. The most widely circulated paper in the land declared for the Montgomery constitution, and had its rebel rag already to fling to the breeze when Fort Sumter should be attacked, the nation utterly cowed, the government overthrown, and Jefferson Davis made president of the twenty-seven Confederate States of America, — New England alone being excluded from the general league. She might be permitted, if she chose, to retain the belittled title of the United States, with its plucked eagle and lowered flag, — the Switzerland of America, — safe only in the contempt of her tyrannous neighbors, wide ruling the continent.

Beneath all this turbulence was the crowded dungeon of slavery. Its imprisoned millions toiled and suffered, and sighed and prayed,

and saw visions and dreamed dreams such as the despised Galileans saw in Jerusalem when prelate and Pilate, ignorant and scornful, were seeking, by reconciliation and compromises, the union of the God of the Hebrews with the idols of Rome. What cared we for these? "Touch slavery where it is?" Never! "Free the slaves?" "Hang him who dreams that dream." "Up with John Brown and his crazy gang, who fancied himself the Moses of this abominable Israel." — How that first martyr but now welcomed the last to the rest and reward of the faithful! Brothers in this service, they shall be brothers in heavenly fruition and eternal renown. — "Abolish slavery instantly and forever?" "Impossible. The slaves will cut their master's throats, will invade the North and expel our laboring population, will be the vagabonds of the continent."

Thus warred the elements.

> "Who shall calm the angry storm?
> Who the mighty task perform
> And bid the raging tumult cease?"

We pay no unwarranted eulogy to President Lincoln when we declare that the peculiar qualities of his nature adapted him to this especial work. We well understand that God was beneath and above all this chaos, breaking the grievous yoke of his children and moving this unwilling nation into higher spheres of life and duty. But he works ever through instruments, and as we properly study the relation of the human nature of Moses, of David, of Paul, to the work he laid upon them, so may we that of our leader to what he was set to do.

(1.) We see how admirably that nature was fitted for its first and most important work, — the uniting the North. Whatever other duties should arise ere the gigantic task was completed, the first duty evidently was to make the loyal States one. They were weakened by the severing of Southern ties. The whole structure

rocked to its base. North-western, Pacific, Central, and North-eastern confederacies were projected. Even cities threatened to assume their independence. The Mayor of New York publicly declared that no troops should pass through her streets, no cannon leave her wharves for the coercion of the rebellious States. Unless we could be united, the whole was lost. There was otherwise no fulcrum upon which to plant the lever of emancipation, — no means of staying the movement of disunion; while to secure the Union was to destroy slavery, as every rebel knew. Therefore this must be done.

His conciliatory character, joined with his perfect simplicity and integrity, was the centre around which the Union sentiment rallied. The people felt that they could trust him with their liberties, for he would not abuse the trust. The hostile party found it hard to complain of so paternal a despot. They might rave at his acts, but not at him. They saw that the salvation of the country was his first and last concern; that he had no private or party ends to serve, but only those of God, his country's, and truth's. He addressed them kindly and generously, as in his letter to the democrats of New York, — being, we presume, the first great ruler in this or any land who wrote letters to his people as frankly as to his family. He thus brought many of their leaders to his side, so that in his army and in his cabinet, as well as in less prominent but hardly less important fields, many of these earnest foes of his party became his warmest supporters. General Butler and General Dix, Senator Dickinson and Edward Everett, Secretary Stanton and Senator Douglas, with thousands of others, gave him their earnest and cordial support.

His conciliatory nature is strikingly seen in the composition of his first cabinet. It contained all of his rivals for the nomination, with one exception, that of General Banks, and he would undoubtedly have had the bureau for New England, had he not taken

up his residence in the West. Such a combination of independent and leading minds, rivals of each other and their head, has never been seen in this land since the first cabinet of Washington, which embraced in it three rivals of each other, if not of him, — three favorites of the nation for his chair; two of whom sat in it, and the constitution was modified solely that the third could also, — an event which might have happened but for his assassination by Aaron Burr.

This course had the desired effect. The country rallied round so gentle a leader, and the union of the yet undismembered fragments was secured. The feeling of the land found expression in its chief, and the various orders and mighty number of traitors yet with us were compelled by popular sentiment, and sometimes by popular violence, to conform to the general will.

(2.) Then came the second step, — the conciliation of the border. Each side essayed this work. Their sympathies and their sins inclined them to the rebels, their instincts and obligations to the nation. The presence of our army constrained its Eastern edge to our side; the influence of ideas, its Western. The line swayed low in the centre, and Kentucky became the battle-ground of this sentiment. Slowly and surely the truth prevailed there. Against their prejudices, their education, their habits, their institutions, they ranged themselves under the flag.

The openly rebellious region must be reduced only with arms. How these fluctuated, and how they triumphed only when fortified with the other and greater idea of the war, history will faithfully show. Here his nature had no chance to exert its influence. Generalship, not statesmanship, was what that work demanded. It was, however, beginning to do so when his career closed. He had other material than a discontented North or a divided border to operate upon, and might have failed as completely there as he had succeeded wonderfully before. Through his armies there, through

himself here, he had closed up the hideous rent secession had made, and beheld North and South, East and West, again and forever, one. He was the uniter of America.

2. But a still greater danger, duty, and glory were before him. We were an enslaved as well as a sundered people. The sighing of the captive had upheaved the nation from its foundations. The closing quotation of Mr. Sumner's first speech against our national sin was being awfully fulfilled: "Beware of the groans of the wounded souls; oppress not to the utmost a single heart; for a solitary sigh has power to overset a whole world." We disregarded those sighs, not solitary, but multitudinous and perpetual as the heavings of the sea, and we were fast reeling to our downfall. To be set aright, this dungeon must be opened. Its millions of innocent captives must go free. This people must be our people, their God our God. How terrible this task! It is ever easier to conquer our judgment than our prejudice. We surrender our reason sooner than our heart. We hated, we despised, we detested, the black man. We preferred slavery, with all its horrors, to immediate and unconditional emancipation. So did Mr. Lincoln. But God is greater than man, and to our martyred leader's eternal honor shall it ever be said, God found him willing in the day of his power. How slowly these steps were taken, how reluctantly, how unbelievingly even, we all know. Yet taken they were. Like Jacob, having so many feeble ones to carry, he must needs travel slowly, yet he moved forward. Every day found him farther than before.

Conciliation was his favorite feeling and policy. But that cannot be adjusted to this most embittering duty. It must stand aside for a season, and deeper traits must be brought into service. His sense of right, the backbone of his nature, which alone made him strong in the fearful strife, saw that there was no other path than this. His training and his feelings

shrank from the negro; his desire to shun distracting elements made him shrink from him yet the more; but duty said, "Go forward! Pronounce the decree of emancipation! Let my people go! Take them by your official hand and recognize them as yours!" And he obeyed.

There was another great conciliator by his side, the head of his armies, the worshipped of the land. He heard the like voice, but refused to listen. Reconciliation and emancipation he declared were impossible. He had the ear and the heart of the President. He warned him, he threatened, he besought. Kentucky begged him to desist. He would mar all her prospects of Union if he pursued that course. The influential half of Missouri entreated. Many wise friends from the North entreated. He hesitated till disaster overwhelmed the chief adviser of this delay, till the volunteer inspiration had gone out in blood, and the suggestion of a draft was met with scowls and threats of defiance from every quarter. The ship was lying on her beam-ends. All God's waves and billows were going over her. The rocks of anarchy were thrusting their sharp fangs into her. Only the throwing overboard of this demon can save her. He clung to the idol yet a little, and made one more prayer to its worshippers to come into the ship and save their god. They heard and jeered. They had a better craft, built for the sole worship of their deity. They entered no amalgamating vessel of freedom and slavery. He kept his word. Slavery was tumbled into the bottomless gulf. The waves roared and hissed the fiercer. Disunion broke its bands among us, and raged in the streets of Northern cities. But all in vain. The ship of State began to right itself. The voice of Christ calmed the sea. The rocks of disunion were submerged, and the quicksands of slavery disappeared forever from the view. The slave became a man, a warrior, — will soon be a citizen, and, merged in the currents of society, be lost in the indistinguishable throng that,

from all nations and lands, rejoice in the common blood and name of America.

Thus will he stand forth in all coming time. To him was decreed the greatest honor history has conferred on man. His sole peer is the father of our country; and he is not his superior. Alike in many traits of character, alike in many points of career, they will share together the reverent gratitude of succeeding generations. Their statues will rise in every city, before every eye. The one delivered the nation from the yoke of vassalage to a once paternal, but then tyrannical power; the other released her from the deadlier grasp of a once fraternal, but then far more tyrannical dominion. The one organized her embryotic communities into States and a nation. The other reorganized these belligerent republics into a solid and perpetual union. The one liberated three millions of his own race from foreign despotism; the other liberated another people than his own — four millions of bound and bleeding victims — from a despotism infinitely more horrible. The influence of both shall go forth for the redemption and regeneration of all lands. The whole world shall sit rejoicingly at the feet of Washington and Lincoln. Happy, proud America! that from her soil sprang, over her soil reigned, in her soil sleep, the ~~two~~ creators and redeemers, under God, of her land and of the world.

We will not dwell upon the defects in this character; for the service it was set to do, it was fully competent: from other service God has mercifully relieved it. As his prototype failed to see and to carry out the full workings of the principle he inaugurated, — as another Virginian was to be the perfecter of the doctrine of democracy which God intended should here have complete expression, and the great leader was removed so that his influence might not embarrass this movement of Providence, — even so may this second Washington have been summoned to his reward, in order that the perfection of that democracy may the more speedily

hasten forward. It could not perhaps have been done before. The country had been so reduced by previous theories of State rights and of long submission to an oligarchy of human flesh, that it could not instantly know, much less discharge, its full duty. The web of the new era might have been rent, had it been then subjected to severer strain. But this crime has made its lace iron, — the Northern iron and the steel, — and we shall henceforth be strong enough, we hope just enough, to confer equal citizenship upon all the nation. We must not only nor chiefly punish the rebellious leaders. This may be our primary, though not our principal duty. The loyal freedman must have his full rights as a man. For this is the new President raised up; not, as most say, to be the juster judge, but to be the truer democrat. The last involves the first. The conditions of the rebel and his former slave, excepting slavery, must be reversed. No citizenship for the rebel leader; perfect citizenship for his slave. No land for the chiefs of the rebellion, homesteads for his loyal bondmen. Expatriation, which was urged upon the negro, not three years ago, must be enforced upon his master. The African had no rights these would respect. These must have none the nation will respect. Outlawed, homeless, exiled, let these once mighty rulers of the land thus expiate their crime of treason, while their victims take their homes and their crowns. The first shall be last, and the last, first.

Whatever be the fate of the rebel, the enfranchisement of the negro alone can renew that land. We have found that our salvation could not be effected without the aid of their bullet. We shall yet find that it cannot be preserved without the aid of their ballot. It is impossible to hang, banish, or disfranchise the half a million former aristocrats of the South. Neither confiscation of their lands nor emancipation of their slaves can annihilate their power. They cannot thus be prevented from vaulting into authority again. The white serfs who have so faithfully fought their battles will assuredly

honor their military commanders with civic power. What can make and keep them powerless? Negro suffrage. Nothing less, nothing more. Set the four millions of the freedmen over against the six millions of white peasantry, and let them grapple. We shall soon see who are the real *men* of that region. These loyal masses will see to it that the disloyal tyrants do not trouble the nation farther. They will be the owners of the soil, and the masters of their masters. They shall rule over their oppressors, and preserve thus the liberty, the unity, the peace of America.

To this consistent and complete democracy the new Jefferson is summoned. If true to his principles, and triumphant over the base prejudices of birth and breeding, he will shine by the side of his forerunner, equal in service, gratitude, and fame. We trust that he will be thus faithful, and that we shall grow as steadily after the divine pattern in the healthful sunshine of a hastening peace as in the fearful midnight of the most bloody of wars.

Let us not be blinded from higher duties by our just vengeance against the assassin. His sin will quickly find him out. That sin no death can adequately punish. Yet Booth is but a babe in iniquity compared with Lee. The assassin never reigns in history by the side of the rebellious chief. He has secured a horrible notoriety. With Clytemnestra the assassinator of Agamemnon, king of men; with Ravaillac, who slew the best king that France ever knew; with "him who fired Ephesian's dome;" with the murderers of our Lord, — he shall hang forever on the gibbet of infamy.

Yet he was but the dagger's point; Lee is its polished handle; slavery the force that drove it home. Shall we wreak our vengeance on the bullet, and let him that fired it go free? The miserable felon assassinated our leader. The yet unharmed general attempted to assassinate the nation. We have been wrestling in his murderous clutch for four years, and received innumerable

stabs in our attempts to prevent our destruction. Is the nation less than one of its citizens? Shall we fawn upon her would-be murderer, and tear his, in our rage, into a thousand atoms? Nay, he too is a murderer. Not alone of the hundreds of thousands whom he has slain in battle, but of the multitudes that he has starved to death in his prisons. He has ridden daily under the walls of these charnel-houses where they were perishing for a crust of bread, and never relented for an instant at the piteous moanings that almost made the walls to groan. When the bony arm of one of our boys was thrust between the bars, he not daring to put his face there, knowing that the sentinel's bullet would strike him dead, and a poor slave-woman thrusts a crust of bread into his hand, that sentinel's bullet instantly spatters her brains upon the sidewalk. And that guard was a soldier of Robert E. Lee, a traitor colonel of the army of the United States, who, despite of his barbarities to our men in the field, our captured soldiers and these lowly creatures, whom we are, by the command of God, especially required to protect, dwells among us unharmed, almost in honor. What was the miserable actor's crime to his? Let us do justice to the greatest traitors in our hand, as we shall to him if Providence shall place him in our power.

But whether we are firm or feeble, God will make both to praise him. How marvellous are His ways! Out of unspeakable crimes He has revealed his glory. Out of the violence of the slave-master has come liberty to all he held in bondage; out of the attempted murderers of the nation, a more perfect nationality; out of the successful murder of its head, a sterner justice, a more thorough and speedy regeneration. Thus has it been most strangely verified before all nations, and in the experience of these transgressors, that

> "Power to the Oppressors of the world is given,
> A might of which they dream not. Oh, the curse,

To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,
Father and Founder of exalted deeds,
And to whole nations, bound in servile straits,
The liberal Donor of capacities
More than heroic ! This to be, nor yet
Have sense of one connatural wish, nor yet
Deserve the least return of human thanks ;
Winning no recompense but deadly hate
With pity mixed, astonishment with scorn."

Such is the fate of Davis, Lee, and Booth. Living or dead, among men or devils, they have the painful consciousness of having been the unwilling instruments of the very ends they strove to frustrate. They have united, liberated, fraternized America, and yet are and ever shall be linked with Pharaoh, and Judas, and Caiaphas, and Pilate, the most execrated and execrable of men.

Thus have all things worked together for our good, so far as we have loved God. From the beginning has he held us in his hand. He has ever prevented our sins from destroying us. Good and evil were in our earliest history, as in our latest. Raleigh and the slave-trade gave their contrary impress to Virginia ; the pilgrims and persecution to Massachusetts ; Huguenots and slavery to South Carolina ; the Dutch greed of gain and love of liberty to New York. The wheat and the tares have grown together until now. Yet always has he been guarding the wheat from utter spoliation. He has eliminated the evil, and educed the good ; he has made our sins and our sufferings go hand in hand, our penitence and our progress ; he has changed New England intolerance into firmness for the right, New York greediness of wealth into rivers of beneficence. He will change Virginia slave-trade into righteous traffic, and South Carolina slavery into the grandest liberty of this continent. The conscientious contraries shall also become a harmonious whole. The Huguenot of Carolina and the Puritan of New England, the Catholic of Mary-

land and Episcopalian of Virginia, the Quaker of Pennsylvania and Dutch Protestant of New York, the Baptist of Rhode Island and Methodist of the prairies, shall yet form, not the broad, but the true church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, on whose divine foundation the nation shall stand in perpetual unity, holiness, and love. Thus may we learn to more perfectly confide in His guidance and grace who has so wonderfully revealed His constant presence in our planting and our growth, and who has shown here, as elsewhere in His kingdom,

> "That many things, having full reference
> To one consent, may work contrariously;
> As many arrows, loosed several ways,
> Come to one mark, as many ways meet in one town,
> As many fresh streams meet in one salt sea,
> As many lives close in the dial's centre,
> So may a thousand actions, once afoot,
> End in one purpose."

Let us then show our grief for our loss by greater faithfulness to the cause for which he died. The grandeur of this cause, in its past, present, and future, was remarkably revealed in his most memorable word and most memorable deed, with which his career was properly crowned. The last inaugural is that word,—the entry into Richmond, the deed. That word is the most truthful, humble, and Christian, that a ruler ever addressed to his people. There is the clearest recognition of the divine will, the humblest prostration before His offended goodness, the amplest confession of the righteousness of His punishments, the largest beneficence to his own most deadly foes.

How sadly it prophesies his own fate! His too must be of the blood which God requires from the sword to repay that drawn by the lash, for two hundred years, from the shrinking flesh of His innocent children.

His dying speech from the national throne will be read with wet eyes by our children's children. As the farewell address of Washington will ever be cherished by the nation, much more will this more profound and pathetic confession of our sins, more resolute expression of our duty and purpose to eradicate them, be admiringly read by remotest generations. It lacks no element of perfection. So short that he that runs may read it; so simple that the most childish can understand it; so statesmanlike in its enunciation of principles that the rulers of the world can profitably study it; so religious that the most pious can find in it the holiest nutriment; so philanthropic that largest souls can grow larger in its air; so clement that the hardest heart cannot but melt in its perusal,—it is the consummate flower of executive orations. Jeremiah could not wish it more penitential, Ezekiel more resolute, John more affectionate. *

It was a worthy requiem. He sung his swan's song, sad, sacred, solemn, sweet. The voice of the ages from David to Christ went wailing through the strain. It will yet be, as it should be, the most popular and powerful word of America.

But if the last inaugural was his litany, the advent into Richmond was his jubilate. No picture of the war will be so frequently painted. It was in extraordinary agreement with his whole life and character, in extraordinary disagreement with that of every other eminent ruler. Here was a more than emperor, who for four years had waged severest war with a portion of his own people that

* The "London Spectator" truly says of him and it, — "He has persevered through all obstacles, without ever giving way to anger, or despondency, or exultation, or popular annoyance, or sectarian fanaticism, or caste prejudice, visibly growing in force of character, in self-possession and in magnanimity, till in his last short message of the Fourth of March we can detect no longer the rude and illiterate mould of a village lawyer's thought, but find it replaced by a grasp of principle, a dignity of manner, and a solemnity of purpose which would have been unworthy neither of Hampden nor of Cromwell, while his gentleness and generosity of feeling towards his foes are almost greater than we should expect of either of them."

had made this their capital. Under many generals had he essayed its capture. Blood had flowed around it like water. Yet it had still proudly resisted the whole strength of his armies. At length, after bloodiest encounters and almost a year of siege, it had fallen into his hands. How should he take possession of his prize? How have all conquerors exulted over such a conquest? When Charles the Bold captured Liege, he compelled its citizens to batter down a new entrance in their walls, through which he marches in triumphant pomp and scorn. When Louis the Great's and David's generals reduced a rebellious city, they sent for their royal masters to take stately possession. Our grand monarch is near by when his great general, as great as their greatest, has won for him the long-coveted prize, and all the country is aflame with joy. Does he enter it in royal state? He sends a grand deputation to take formal possession of rescued Sumter. He himself walks up the streets of the capital of the rebellion attended by twelve marines and half-a-dozen officers and friends, without music or banners, or military or civic pomp. Thousands of unshackled slaves dance around him in an uncontrollable ecstasy of delight. They look upon the face of their deliverer. To them it shines like that of Moses as he descended from the mount. Like the lame man unchained of his life-long fetters of infirmity, they precede and follow this to them chief of Christ's apostles, walking and leaping and praising God. They too have been unchained of life-long fetters, that have made them sit at the beautiful gate of the temple of knowledge and liberty, powerless to move, hopeless of salvation.

Their sneering master and mistress (such, thank God, no longer!) scowl from their windows upon him and the tumultuous crowd of beggared blacks that throng him, as Saul's daughter did upon the rejoicing David, despising him in their hearts. They do not mar his calm content nor the delight of the noisy escort who guide

the ruler both of them and of their masters to the residence of the fled usurper. He is indifferent to their contempt, and only regards the wonderful salvation of which he has been the chosen instrument, but which Jesus of Nazareth has alone effected.

As Christ entered into Jerusalem, the city that above all others hated, rejected, and should soon slay him, attended by those, but now lame and blind and deaf and leprous, whom he had cured, so did this, his servant, enter the city that above all others hated and rejected him, and would soon be the real if not intentional cause of his death, attended by thousands who had been saved from worse maladies than these, out of whom, in a moment, legions of devils that had long possessed them had been instantly and forever expelled by the same Divine Redeemer, through his appointed word. "Behold thy king cometh, meek," is most beautifully true here and now. The haughty tyrant is gone, the loving father is come. Well may their glad hearts dance for joy. Well may the air ring with their jubilant hallelujahs. Well may the paternal President feel the comfort and strength of the hour. The blessings of those that were ready to perish came upon him. His work draws near its close. The North is united, the rebel subdued, the slave set free. His cup is full. He can well exclaim, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation and the glory of thy people Israel."

How near that departure was! This was his Palm Sunday. Ten days elapse and he follows his Divine Master, through like bloody hands, to a like glorious eternity.

Thus did our king enter his strong city. Thus did he triumph over his Philistia. The story will be wrought in song and canvas, over the world and adown the ages, as the most beautiful and most rare expression of a Christian triumph. John Brown's last act, the kissing of the slave-child, will be one with Abraham Lincoln's last walk up the streets of Richmond, attended by ten thousand of

his emancipated worshippers. With such a word as the inaugural and such a deed as this, we may truly feel that his life was rounded to a perfect close. He could properly hear the voice of the Master, saying, "It is enough; come up higher! Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

His work is done. Ours is yet unfinished. His place in history and in heaven is sure. Ours is yet to win. We shall show our admiration for him more by completing his work, than by standing too long gazing steadfastly into the heavens whither he has ascended.

As he constantly moved forward with the advancing hour, so must we. To pause where he stopped is to go backward. Let us keep step with God in every path of Christian and patriotic duty, enlarging the bounds and upbuilding the walls of the kingdom of Christ by our faith, our zeal, our love. Then shall we best express our sorrow over him who fell so untimely, yet so timely, and become, if not, like him, a martyr, at least a witness for and a worker with our God. Then shall we be a sharer of his labor and his reward. What a reward it is to him whose most peaceful nature was compelled to most stormy and repulsive service! How ineffably sweet must be the quiet and repose of the banks of the river of life, after this dark and bloody night of earth and time! There he rests from his labors, and his works—how many and how mighty!—do follow him and shall forever follow. There he worships the Chief of the martyrs,—whose form like his was pierced by the murderous stroke, whose soul like his was bowed with sorrows not his own, whose life like his was given for the redemption of others than himself,—with whom he may feel himself made one, in that final confession of his enemies, "He saved others, himself he cannot save;" as he is also one in forgiving them for their atrocious deed. Before that Saviour does he, thoughtless of self, bow in bliss and gratitude

unknown to earthly hearts. Through His infinitely greater service and sacrifice has he, a poor slave of sin and hell, found everlasting redemption and equal citizenship with the unfallen angels of God Let us, like him, though with eyes dimmed by tears and time, gaze, in faith, on the illustrious martyr of the universe, our Saviour, our Redeemer, our God. Let us consecrate ourselves, soul, body, and spirit, to that divinest purpose, for whose establishment He poured out His soul unto death, and to whose completion He has allowed so many of His disciples to feebly but gratefully follow Him afar off, in like sacrifice of themselves upon the altar of their faith, — assured that, under His supervision, despite the seeming triumphs of men and devils, that cause is steadily advancing to its earthly and eternal consummation.

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